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DEMOGRAPHY OF VAN PROVINCE, 1844-1914

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Today, more than eight decades after the violent death of the Ottoman Empire, population statistics of the defunct empire continue to be debated by scholars as well as politicians. Since 1965 the statistical controversy, some call it “the war of numbers,” has occupied an important place in the propaganda of the Turkish government in order to prove that no genocide was committed against the Armenians during World War I or at least to minimize the number of Armenians killed by lowering the total number of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1914. The main argument of the Turkish government and some scholars in the West is that there was a war from 1914 to 1918 and naturally people die during such conflicts.

On the eve of World War I, Armenians lived in about 4,050 cities, towns, and villages within the current borders of the Republic of Turkey.¹ At present, nearly all who are left live in one city, Istanbul.² While in 1914 the Armenian-inhabited towns and villages in the province or *vilayet* of Van numbered over 400,³ now there is none. In 1914, the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, according to my calculations, were not fewer than 2.3 million.⁴ Today, the entire remaining Armenian community in Turkey would scarcely fill a large stadium.⁵

¹ Sarkis Karayan, *The Extermination of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire: An Inquiry to Determine the Number of Armenians Killed in Turkey during 1915-1923, with an Index-Gazetteer of over 4,000 Armenian Inhabited Places in Turkey in 1914*. Unpublished manuscript. This manuscript gives the names, population figures, and location of Armenian-inhabited places in the Ottoman Empire in 1914. In addition, there is a critical discussion of almost all population statistics given by various Armenian and non-Armenian authors.

² Apart from Istanbul, there is now only one village with an Armenian community, called Vakifli in the Musa Dagh region.

³ Data from Karayan, *Extermination of Armenians*.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ The Turkish government census for 1955 stated that a total of 56,242 persons reported

Before discussing population statistics of Van vilayet, I want to consider them within the general context of Ottoman population statistics. The Ottoman government did not pay special attention to the number of Armenians until 1878, when the internal issue of reforms in the Armenian vilayets became an international problem, as part of the Eastern Question at the Congress of Berlin.⁶ It was during and after the Berlin Congress that population statistics started to play a significant role in discussions between the Ottoman government and foreign powers, namely Great Britain, France, and Russia. The Ottoman delegates in Berlin showed the total Armenian population of the empire to be half their actual number.

The previous Ottoman figures on Armenians were quite different. The Ottoman census of 1844 is considered to be the first real census in the empire, counting 2,400,000 Armenians, two million of whom lived in the Asiatic provinces and the rest in European Turkey. Abdolonyme Ubigini was one of the first to publish the results of this census.⁷ Ibrahim Hakki Aykol, a modern Turkish historian, while pointing out the deficiencies in the 1844 census, nevertheless describes it as the first census of the Ottoman Empire done on modern principles.⁸ Details of this census have not been discovered, or at least they have never been released. The Ottoman government continued to accept the figure of 2.4 million from 1844 until 1877.⁹ According to the govern-

that Armenian was their mother tongue, while 14,392 persons reported Armenian to be their second tongue. It is safe to assume that all of the latter group were Armenians. See Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Başbakanlık, İstatistik Genel Müdürlüğü, *23 ekim 1955 genel nüfus sayımı* (Istanbul: Müdürlük, 1961), p. 114. The number of Armenians and especially of native Armenian speakers has declined significantly since that census.

⁶ The six Armenian vilayets were Van, Erzerum (Karin), Mamuret-ul-Aziz (Kharpert or Kharberd), Bitlis, Diarbekir (Tigranakert), and Sivas (Sebastia).

⁷ Abdolonyme Ubigini, *Lettres sur la Turquie: Ou, Tableau statistique, religieux, politique, administratif, militaire, commercial, etc. de l'Empire Ottoman, depuis le Khattî-Cherif de Gulkhané* (1839), 2 vols. (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1853-54), vol. 2, p. 455.

⁸ Ibrahim Hakki Aykol, *Tanzimat* (Istanbul: Maarif Matbaası, 1940), vol. 1, p. 548. This is a collective work published on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the *Tanzimat* reforms.

⁹ See, for example, the book published on the occasion of the International Exposition in Paris in 1867 by a ranking Ottoman official, Salaheddine Bey, *La Turquie à l'Exposition Universelle de 1867* (Paris, 1867), pp. 210-14, where it is stated that Armenians number 2.4 million in the Ottoman Empire. Another high Ottoman official, Megurdich (Mkrtich) Bey Dadian, *La société arménienne contemporaine: Les Arméniens de l'Empire Ottoman* (Paris: A. Franck, 1867), p. 8, states that Armenians in the Ottoman Empire numbered 3.4 million, the majority being in Asia Minor.

ment's *salname* (yearbook) for 1877, the total number of Armenians is again given as 2.4 million.¹⁰ The population of the eastern regions, including Erzerum, Baiburt, Erzinjan, Manazkert, Mush, Bitlis, and Van, is given as 1,150,000.

Matters changed in 1878 when the Ottoman delegation at the Berlin Congress lowered the number of Armenians for the Armenian provinces to 586,000.¹¹ The breakdown was as follows: Erzerum vilayet, 104,000; Bitlis, 156,000; Van, 78,000; Kharput (Kharpert), 88,000; Diyarbekir, 54,000; Sivas, 106,000. I have calculated that if these Armenian vilayets had only 586,000 Armenians, then the total Armenian population, according to the Ottoman government, could be no more than 1,250,000 in 1878. And in fact, from 1878 to 1914, the official Ottoman figures for the Armenians continued to range between 1,123,532 for the year 1895¹² and 1,294,851 for 1914.¹³

The Vilayet of Van

For administrative purposes, the Ottoman Empire was divided into vilayets, which were subdivided successively into *sanjaks*, *kazas*, and *nahiyes*. Van vilayet, as an administrative entity, did not exist prior to 1877. In a book published by J.J. Hellert in 1838, there is a map of eastern Asia Minor.¹⁴ It shows three main areas. The northern part is Erzerum, the middle part is Armenia, and the southern part is Kurdistan. According to the Erzerum vilayet yearbook for 1874, Van

¹⁰ I have not seen the *salname* for 1877. Figures quoted are from Khachatur Badalyan, *Haykakan hartse San-Stefanoyi paymanagrum ev Berlini kongresum 1878 t.* [The Armenian Question in the Treaty of San Stefano and at the Berlin Congress in 1878] (Erevan: Erevan State University, 1955), pp. 152-56.

¹¹ Quoted by A. Hambaryan, "Arevmtahayeri tvakanaki hartsı shurj" [On the Issue of the Numbers of Western Armenians], *Banber Erevani hamalsarani*, no. 2 (1969), p. 100.

¹² Kemal H. Karpat, *Ottoman Population 1830-1914: Demographic and Social Characteristics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), pp. 156-57. The actual figures are as follows: Armenian Orthodox (Apostolic) males 553,188 and females 478,636 for a total of 1,031,824; Catholics 141,174; and Protestants 42,242. The latter two together totaled 183,416. At least half of these (91,708) can be assumed to have been Armenians, making the total number of Armenians 1,123,532.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹⁴ J.J. Hellert, *Arménie et Kurdistan* (Paris, 1838), section of maps called *Atlas de l'Empire Ottoman*, plate XL.

province was one of its sanjaks.¹⁵ Around 1877, Van was made into a separate vilayet. In 1888, the southern, mainly Kurdish-inhabited Hekkiari or Hakkari sanjak was attached to Van vilayet.¹⁶

It has been suspected from the inception of the vilayet reorganization in the 1880s that the main purpose of the Ottoman government was to join Muslim, mainly Kurdish, areas to provinces that had heavy Armenian concentrations, thereby reducing the Armenian population to a minority.¹⁷ Thus, as mentioned, Hekkiari was attached to the Van vilayet; the Kurdish-inhabited Seert (Sghert) region, to Bitlis vilayet; districts south of Malatia, to Kharpert vilayet; and other Muslim-inhabited districts in the south and west, to the Diarbekir and Sivas vilayets. In the spring of 1895, a memorandum of the French, Russian, and British ambassadors at Constantinople drew to the attention of the Ottoman government the frequent territorial reorganizations in the eastern provinces and suggested that the number of vilayets be reduced in such a way that particular ethnic groups would more or less live together within the same administrative entity.¹⁸

The total area of Van vilayet, according to Vital Cuinet, was 47,700 square kilometers or 18,417 square miles, Van sanjak being 22,700 square kilometers or 8,764 square miles (including Lake Van, which is 5,454 square kilometers), and Hekkiari sanjak covering 25,000 square kilometers or 9,653 square miles.¹⁹ The Armenian encyclopedia gives the area of the whole vilayet as 39,300 square kilometers (15,174 square miles).²⁰ For comparison, the present Armenian republic is 29,800 square kilometers or 11,506 square miles.

As mentioned, Van vilayet had two sanjaks: Van and Hekkiari. Van

¹⁵ *Erzerum vilayet salnamesi, 1291 [Anno Hejirae]* (Published in Istanbul). Erzerum vilayet was comprised of the following sanjaks: Erzerum, Kars and Childir, Erzinjan, Bayazid, Van, and Mush.

¹⁶ For various administrative changes in eastern Asia Minor from 1840 to 1914, see Khachatur Badalyan, "Vani nahange 1840-akan-1914 tt." [The Province of Van from 1840 to 1914], *Banber Erevani hamalsarani*, no. 3 (1986), pp. 13-27.

¹⁷ Marcel Leart, *La Question Arménienne à la lumière des documents* (Paris: Librairie Maritime et Coloniale, 1913), pp. 23-24. Marcel Leart is the pen name of Krikor Zohrab, writer and member of the Ottoman Parliament who was arrested and killed with other Armenian intellectuals in 1915. He used this pen name for this book only.

¹⁸ The full text of the memorandum is given by Leart, *La Question Arménienne*, pp. 38-42.

¹⁹ Vital Cuinet, *La Turquie d'Asie*, 4 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1892), 2:631, 688.

²⁰ *Haykakan Sovetakan hanragitaran* [Armenian Soviet Encyclopedia], vol. 11 (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1985), p. 275.

sanjak was inhabited mostly by Armenians, and was made up of twelve kazas: 1. Van-Tosp, 2. Hayots Dzor (Khavadzor), 3. Arjak, 4. Timar, 5. Berkri, 6. Arjesh, 7. Artske (Adiljevaz or Adiljavaz), 8. Karjkan, 9. Karkar, 10. Moks, 11. Shatakh, 12. Gevash (Gavash).²¹ Hekkiari sanjak was inhabited mostly by Kurds. It had six kazas: 1. Hekkiari or Hakkari (Julamerk), 2. Aghbak (Elbak), 3. Norduz, 4. Mahmudi, 5. Gavar (Giavar), 6. Mamuret-ul-Hamid (Khoshab). Apart from Armenians and Kurds, the other ethnic groups in the province were Turks, Circassians (Cherkes), Assyrians, Jews, Yezidis, and Gypsies.

Although there are no reliable sources for the various ethnic groups mentioned, Hambardzum Eramian has calculated the following figures:²² Armenians, 180,000-200,000; Turks, 30,000, mostly in Van city and the northern kazas of Arjesh and Adiljevaz; Kurds, 130,000, mostly in Hekkiari sanjak; Circassians, about 300 in Adiljevaz; Assyrians (Nestorians), 80,000 to 100,000, mostly in Timar, Saray, and Julamerk; Jews, 1,500 in Bashkale (Aghbak) and Gavar; Yezidis, 2,000 in various kazas; Gypsies, 500, mostly in Van city.

The yearbook for Van vilayet for 1897 (1315 by the *hijra* Muslim calendar) gives the population figures for Muslims and non-Muslims.²³ The Muslims were 207,834, and non-Muslims were 101,285, making a total of 309,119. As in all Ottoman statistics, the Muslims were counted together, with no breakdown of the separate ethnic Muslim elements. Based on these figures for Van vilayet, Armenians could not be anywhere near 100,000, since the total of 101,285 for non-Muslims also included Nestorians, Chaldeans, Jews, and Gypsies. Information of interest in this *salname* is that Van sanjak had 885 villages and Hekkiari sanjak had 689 villages, making a total of 1,574.

The official Ottoman yearbooks are generally very poor in population statistics. This is true of the Imperial *salnames*, called *Salname devleti Osmaniye*, as well as *salnames* for the vilayets. No official Ottoman census figures have been published for Van vilayet with a

²¹ Administrative subdivisions were frequently changed. In the list above, the following had become *nahiyes* in 1914: Van-Tosp, Khavadzor, Arjak, Timar, Berkri, Karjkan, Karkar, and Moks.

²² Hambardzum Eramian, *Hushardzan Van-Vasporakani* [Memorial of Van-Vasporakan], 2 vols. (Alexandria: Aram Kasabian, 1929), vol. 1, pp. 14-15.

²³ *Van Vilayeti salnamesi* (Istanbul, 1315 [*Anno Hejirae*]), p. 761. This is the first *salname* for Van vilayet, and the only one available to me. I do not know how many subsequent *salnames* for Van vilayet appeared until 1914.

detailed listing of its cities, towns, and villages and their population statistics. Fortunately, there are other sources that give detailed figures for the Armenian population.

Population Statistics

There were five censuses of the Armenian population of Van vilayet. These were done in 1853, 1878, 1899, 1909, and 1914. A complete and detailed reproduction of these censuses has been published in 1987 by Khachatur Badalyan.²⁴ A summary of these censuses is presented in Tables 1 and 2.

1. The census of 1853 (Tables 1 and 2, Column A). This is most probably the first enumeration of the Armenian population of Van vilayet. It was done at the behest of the Armenian Catholicos Nerses Ashtaraketsi of Echmiadzin. It was conducted by a cleric, Gevorg vardapet Ter-Barseghian from the monastery of Lim island, in the northern part of Lake Van. He collected the population statistics and the names of 307 towns and villages. The census for the Hekkiari sanjak was done in 1851 by Pilibos vardapet, the prelate of the Saint Bartoghomeos Monastery in Aghbak kaza. He collected 53 Armenian-inhabited places in Hekkiari sanjak, and these are given in Column A, starting from Norduz down to Mahmudi. Column A presents the result of these two censuses, combined in one column, in the year 1853. The census figures collected by Ter-Barseghian were published in Mkrtich Khrimian's monthly periodical, *Artsvi Vaspurakan*, starting in 1858 and continuing for the next two years. The publication of Armenian population figures by Khrimian was a very bold undertaking, as it might have resulted in increased taxes for Armenians. It shows the spirited and innovative character of Khrimian.²⁵

The population figures for Hekkiari sanjak were printed by Giut Aghanian in the *Divan Hayots patmutian*.²⁶ What is missing from the data of the 1853 census, as given by Badalyan, is the population of

²⁴ Khachatur M. Badalyan, "Vani nahangi hayabnak bnakavayreri tsutsaknern est arandzin gavarakneri ev gyughakhumberi" [Lists of Armenian-Inhabited Places of Van Province by Districts and Village Clusters], *Banber Erevani hamalsarani*, no. 2 (1987), pp. 83-110.

²⁵ Khrimian published *Artsvi Vaspurakan* in Constantinople from 1855 to 1856 and then in Van's Varagavank from 1858 to 1864. It resumed publication under M. Ananian at Constantinople from 1872 to 1874.

²⁶ The year and page of this series by Aghanian were not available.

Van city, but *Artsvi Vaspurakan*, 1858, no. 11, shows 2,528 families made up of 13,752 persons.

The 1853 census as presented in Tables 1 and 2, Column A, shows 361 Armenian-inhabited cities and villages, 9,853 Armenian families (7,325 rural and 2,528 in Van city), and 63,769 persons (50,017 rural and 13,752 in Van city). By including both the numbers of families and the total Armenian population of a place it is possible to calculate the average family size: in Van city, 5.4 persons; Van-Tosp, 6.4; Berkri, 7.0; Karjkan, 8.4, and so forth.²⁷

2. The census of 1878 (Tables 1 and 2, Column B). The figures for this year were collected by Eremia vardapet Tevkants (Ter-Sargisian) at the request of Archbishop Mkrtich Khrimian. The results are in Manuscript no. 57/III in the Toros Azatian section of the Museum of Literature and the Arts in Erevan. The census shows only the number of inhabitants in each locality, without mentioning the number of families. This census gives 364 villages inhabited by Armenians, with a total population of 98,428, not including Van city. If the number 18,460 persons for the city is added, the figure given by Aleksandr Eritsov in 1876, this makes a total of 116,888 Armenians in the province.²⁸

3. The census of 1899 (Tables 1 and 2, Column C). The figures for this year are from a book by Russian General Vladimir Mayewski,

²⁷ In my research of Armenian population figures for 1914, I have faced the problem of the average size of the Armenian family in different parts of the Ottoman Empire, because in most Armenian statistics it is only the number of families which is given. Fortunately, some give the number of both families and persons. The figures I have calculated reveal that in Bitlis vilayet the average size ranged from 5.9 in the Dadik region to 10.8 persons in the Pozgan region of Sasun. For Erzerum, it was 7.2 for the city of Erzerum but 12.5 persons for Kemakh kaza.

²⁸ Aleksandr Eritsov's figure is cited by Armen Mikayelyan, "Van kaghaki bnakchutyune (XIX d. verchin karord — XX d. skisb)" [The Population of Van City (Last Quarter of Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century)], *Lraber hasarakakan gitutyunneri*, no. 8 (1987), p. 37. Eritsov's study is in Russian, A.D. Eritsov, *Spisok naselennykh punktov byvshei Erzerumskoi oblasti, nakhodivsheisia vo vremennom upravlenii Rossii* ("Materialy dlia opisaniia Irana i Aziatskoi Turtzii") [The Names of Inhabited Places in the Former Province of Erzerum, Which Were under the Temporary Administration of Russia ("Materials for the Description of Iran and Asiatic Turkey")] (Tiflis, 1883), 2 vols. For the population figure on Van, see vol. 2, p. 126. An historian and archeologist, Eritsov (1840-1902) served as "special missions" official on General Loris-Melikov's staff during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. He wrote two books in Armenian, one about the Armenian Church in the Caucasus in the nineteenth century, and the other a history of the Nersisian Theological Seminary in Tiflis.

vice-consul at Van from 1894 to 1899. It is not known how he collected the population figures. His book, written in Russian and published in 1904, bears the title, *Military-Statistical Description of Van and Bitlis Vilayets (with an Addendum of Population Statistics)*.²⁹

Justin McCarthy, an American demographer, states that Mayewski's population figures were checked by the Ottoman War Office, which found them to be exact and thus translated the book into Turkish for their own use.³⁰ He concludes that Mayewski's figures are the most reliable, especially when compared with Armenian sources. In fact, he states that Armenian sources have borrowed from Mayewski's figures. I do not find Mayewski's figures very different from those given by Armenian sources before he arrived in Van in 1894. McCarthy's assertion that the Ottoman War Office checked Mayewski's statistics is from the opening statement of the Turkish translator, Major of Cavalry Mehmed Sadik.³¹ McCarthy concludes that "Ottoman archives have come to light by a circuitous route," and in the same paragraph he states that Mayewski himself collected the population figures "while on a Foreign Office appointment, properly studied, traveled, and saw nearly every corner of the two provinces in a period of more than five years."³² Evidently McCarthy is unaware that Turks have been changing the text of Mayewski's book for political purposes and that some statements in the Turkish version of the book are not those of

²⁹ The copy I have of General Mayewski's book is in French and Russian. Unfortunately, it does not have the statistical section, which apparently made up one-third of the book. The title of the book in French reads, *Les Massacres d'Arménie, d'après les constatations authentiques du: Général Russe Mayewski, Consul Général de Russie à Van puis à Erzeroum: Soigneusement transcrit de son rapport portant le titre des statistique des Provinces de Van et de Bitlis*. The date of publication is not stated, but the original place of publication is given as St. Petersburg. General Mayewski's book has created many controversies. Mayewski was morbidly anti-Armenian, and the Turks have used the book since 1912 for propaganda purposes. Along this line, Vahakn Dadrian has written a very illuminating review of General Mayewski's book and its use for propaganda purposes by Turkey. See Vahakn N. Dadrian, "The Perversion by Turkish Sources of Russian General Mayewski's Report on the Turko-Armenian Conflict," *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies* 5 (1990-91): 139-52.

³⁰ Justin McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities: The Population of Ottoman Anatolia and the End of the Empire* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1983), pp. 76, 86 notes 40-41.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 84 notes 39, 41. The Turkish name of the book is, according to McCarthy, *Van ve Bitlis vilayetleri askeri istatistiği*. It was published in Istanbul in 1912, apparently for political purposes. See note 29 above.

³² McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities*, p. 71.

Mayewski.

Mayewski's statistics, given in the number of families, is as follows (Tables 1 and 2, Column C): 424 cities and villages (including Van city), 10,734 Armenian families (excluding Van city). Mayewski gives the population of Van city as 2,887 Armenian families. Thus the total becomes 13,621 families.³³ Mayewski considers the average size of the family to be 8 persons. Thus, 13,621 multiplied by eight gives a total of 108,968 persons and multiplied by seven gives 95,347 persons.

4. The census of 1909 (Tables 1 and 2, Column D). The figures for 1909 are from A-Do's study on the vilayets of Van, Erzerum, and Bitlis.³⁴ A-Do (Hovhannes Ter-Martirosian, 1867-1954) was a historian and demographer. He traveled to Van, Erzerum, and Bitlis vilayets several times to gather economic, social, and demographic data. At Van, he collected his information from the church records kept at Aghtamar and from persons knowledgeable about particular kazas. He gathered statistics from 3 cities and 387 Armenian-inhabited villages. The list is not complete, as he was unable to collect figures for most of Hekkiari sanjak, thus missing about 50 Armenian villages. The result of his study is as follows: 390 sites; 16,020 Armenian families, including 4,000 in Van city; 100,176 Armenians, including 20,000 in Van city. A-Do considered the average size of the Armenian family as 7 persons for the villages, and 6 in the cities and towns. His figure for Van city is evidently only an estimate, as it is given in rounded figures.

5. The census of 1914 (Tables 1 and 2, Column E). Prior to World War I, a census was carried out in all eastern provinces, probably by authorities of the Armenian Church. The results have been published in A-Do's second book, *Mets depkere Vaspurakanum 1914-1915 tvakannerin*, in the new series of *Artsvi Vaspurakan*, and by Teodik. They show 438 sites; 19,302 families, including 4,132 in Van; 119,093 persons, including 22,470 in Van.³⁵

³³ Quoted from Mayewski's book by Armen Mikayelyan, "Van kaghaki bnakchutyune," p. 37. Badalyan does not give Mayewski's figure for Van city.

³⁴ A-Do, *Vani, Bitlisi ev Erzrumi vilayetnere* [The Vilayets of Van, Bitlis, and Erzerum] (Erevan: Kultura Press, 1912), pp. 9-50.

³⁵ A-Do, *Mets depkere Vaspurakanum, 1914-1915 tvakannerin* [The Major Incidents in Vaspurakan, 1914-1915] (Erevan: Loys, 1917), pp. 11-30. *Artsvi Vaspurakan* (Boston: General Society of Vasbouragan), serialized in the issues of 1942 to 1944. In the last issue

There have been several other Armenian writers who have given figures for Van vilayet. Garegin Srvandztiants visited all of Van vilayet and collected demographic data.³⁶ He did not publish his statistics, however, because others used his data and claimed the authorship of the work. He does not identify these people nor the names of publications where they were printed. The Armenian Patriarchate gave the figure of 400,000 for 1882.³⁷ Manvel Mirakhorian visited Van vilayet in 1883. However, he could not collect accurate population figures.³⁸

The Armenian Patriarchate gives the figure of 192,000 for the year 1910 for Van vilayet.³⁹ Tseruk (Artak Darbinian) on the basis of his study in 1903, found that Van city had 15,000 Armenians and the rest of the vilayet, 121,200, making a total of 136,200.⁴⁰ His figures are not from official sources but rather from persons, such as merchants, who had traveled for years in the kazas, as well as from persons who had made special studies of particular localities.

Ottoman Government Figures for Armenians in Van Vilayet

No government figures are available for Van prior to 1877. In 1878, the total Armenian population is given as 78,000;⁴¹ in 1881-82, 34,434 Armenian males, 26,014 females, for a total of 60,448.⁴² If the undercounting of females is compensated for by doubling the figure for males, this would be 68,868 persons. For 1895, the figures were 36,349

that has the statistics, no. 12 (1944), p. 8, it is stated that the population figures were collected from the church records of Van and Aghtamar in 1913-14. Teodik [Lapjinian], *Goghgota: hay hovevorakanutian ev ir hotin aghetali 1915 tariin* [Calvary: Of the Armenian Clergy and Its Flock in the Catastrophic Year of 1915], ed. Ara Kalayjian (New York: St. Vartan Press, 1985), pp. 534-57.

³⁶ Garegin Srvandztiants, *Hamov hotov* [Delicious and Fragrant], in *Erker* [Works], vol. 1 (Erevan: Armenian Academy of Sciences, 1978), p. 396.

³⁷ Leart, *La Question Arménienne*, p. 59.

³⁸ Manvel G. Mirakhorian, *Nkaragrakan ughevorutian i hayabnak gavars arevelian Tachkastani, 1884-85* [A Descriptive Journey to the Armenian-Inhabited Provinces of Eastern Turkey, 1884-85], 3 vols. (Constantinople: M.K. Sareyan, 1885).

³⁹ Maghakia Ormanian, *L'Eglise Arménienne* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1910), pp. 181-82.

⁴⁰ Tseruk, "Vani nahange nerkayums" [The Province of Van at Present], *Murch* (Tiflis), no. 4 (1904), pp. 26-28.

⁴¹ See note 11 above and the discussion in this study.

⁴² Karpas, *Ottoman Population*, p. 146.

males and 28,280 females, for a total of 64,629.⁴³ Correcting for undercounting would give a total of 72,698 persons. For 1897, the records indicate 26,085 males and 28,996 females, totaling 55,081 persons.⁴⁴ For the same year of 1897, *Van vilayet salnamesi* gives 101,285 Christians and 207,834 Muslims. There is no mention of Armenians. For 1906, the figures are 33,994 males and 25,388 females, totaling 67,988 when correcting for undercounting.⁴⁵ For 1914, the total Armenian population is given as 67,792.⁴⁶

Ottoman Government Figures for Muslims in Van Vilayet

For 1881/82-1893, the records show 31,957 males, 27,455 females, for a total of 59,412;⁴⁷ for 1894, a total of 212,552.⁴⁸ Kemal Karpat, who uses this figure, does not question or apparently even notice the discrepancy between these population figures and those for 1894. For 1895, the numbers are given as 56,462 males and 40,879 females, corrected for undercounting of females (56,462 x 2) to 112,924,⁴⁹ and for 1897, 45,294 males and 31,662 females, corrected for undercounting of females (45,294 x 2) to 90,588.⁵⁰ Again in the 1897 salname, the number of Muslims is given as 207,834. The discrepancies in Ottoman census figures are significant. For 1906, the figures are 29,408 males and 25,174 females, corrected for undercounting of females (29,408 x 2) 58,816,⁵¹ and for 1914, 179,380.⁵² These population figures for Muslims, given above, show the total unreliability of official Ottoman population figures, contrary to Justin McCarthy's assertion that only Ottoman official census figures are trustworthy.

⁴³ Ibid., p. 156.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 160.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 168.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 188.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 146.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 155.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 156.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 160.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 168.

⁵² Ibid., p. 188.

**Table 1. Number of Armenian-Inhabited Villages
and Van City, 1853-1914**

<i>Kazas</i>	A 1853	B 1878	C 1899	D 1909	E 1914
Van Tosp	23	23	23	18	21
Hayots Dzor	31	30	31	32	31
Arjak	20	20	17	22	19
Timar	35	35	38	38	39
Berkri	6	10	16	26	41
Arjesh	23	30	44	43	51
Artske	18	20	30	23	24
Karjkan	19	22	27	22	28
Karkar	9	9	7	19	9
Moks	51	46	50	48	49
Gevash	28	27	23	23	21
Shatakh	44	38	48	51	51
Norduz	12	9	14	11	10
Julamerk	4	3	5	na	5
Gavar	3	2	5	na	2
Aghbak	30	25	24	na	19
Khoshab	2	12	16	11	12
Mahmudi	2	2	5	na	5
Van City	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	361	364	424	390	438

Table 2. Census Summaries of Armenian Population of Van, 1853-1914

<i>Kazas</i>	A	B	C	D	E			
	1853 families	1853 persons	1878 persons	1899 families	1909 families	1909 persons	1914 families	1914 persons
Van Tosp	960	6,112	10,034	1,377	1,730	12,110	1,812	10,835
Hayots Dzor	635	4,083	7,744	1,102	1,299	6,968	1,436	8,869
Arjak	387	2,900	5,055	582	763	5,341	924	6,099
Timar	1,134	7,145	12,018	1,782	1,945	13,255	2,388	14,401
Berkri	151	1,057	2,398	340	817	4,655	1,007	5,152
Arjesh	335	2,542	8,745	518	674	4,468	1,295	10,312
Artske	357	2,665	10,997	503	761	5,378	816	5,589
Karjkan	392	3,299	4,466	768	746	5,222	875	6,439
Karkar	105	748	1,524	93	182	1,274	157	1,103
Moks	798	5,161	8,135	828	976	6,832	829	5,062
Gevash	667	4,573	7,195	793	903	6,321	1,072	6,186
Shatakh	688	4,506	6,743	778	881	5,951	1,114	6,721
Norduz	171	1,440	2,219	168	164	1,148	240	1,630
Julamerk	67	469	440	85	na	na	73	534
Gavar	96	672	1,465	96	na	na	280	1,680
Aghbak	351	2,457	7,157	562	na	na	482	3,439
Khoshab	12	86	1,785	275	179	1,253	252	1,746
Mahmudi	19	102	308	84	na	na	118	826
Van City	2,528	13,752	18,460	2,887	4,000	20,000	4,132	22,470
TOTAL	9,853	63,769	116,888	13,621	16,020	100,176	19,302	119,093

Conclusion

1. Ottoman census figures of 1914 for the Armenian population of Van vilayet represent 41 percent less than the actual figure.

2. The estimates of Armenian sources for the Armenian population of Van vilayet in 1914 constitute about 50 percent more than the actual figures.

3. Contrary to what Justin McCarthy confidently asserts,⁵³ detailed Armenian Church sources for the Armenian population in Van vilayet in 1914, and for that matter for many other vilayets in Turkey, do exist; one need only look for such information.

4. Armenians were a majority in Van sanjak, and Kurds in Hekkiari sanjak. The Turkish population was no more than 10 percent of the total.

⁵³ McCarthy, *Muslims and Minorities*, p. 55.